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SOCIAL ACTION DIGEST®

NOTES

from your editor

Dear friends, - I'll admit that I am a bit apprehensive right now. Here I sit, trying to write a nice editorial, and I know fully well that some readers will get mad at me. Because of the article about women on p. 3.

Women do create problems, don't they? Problems of all kinds and sizes - small, medium and big problems. Just think of the song in MY FAIR LADY: "But let a woman in your life..." Man, o man! But, gentlemen, what good does it do to merely sit there and moan? Could the problem be solved by exterminating all women from the face of the earth? (Please! I am merely asking a rhetorical question.) It seems that this solution is a bit too extreme. Others, more inclined toward moderation, may be satisfied with decimating the number of women. Will that be sufficient? Or should we trust in the educational process which takes a great deal of time and patience? Well, dear reader, you take it from here: discuss it, reach your own conclusions, and let me know. Whatever your conclusion will be, nobody can deny that A MAN'S LIFE IN A WOMAN'S WORLD is, well, ahem... better read it for yourself on pp. 3-5. By the way, I would like to publish a similar article on the shortcomings of man. If you find one - I mean an article - will you please let me know. I mean it.

After a sermon some people stand up strengthened, others wake up refreshed. I hope all of you will like to read the observations on the priest's role in the lay apostolate. It may be summarized by my old motto "Shake Well Before Using." (O.K., so it isn't original - but it works, doesn't it?) The priest as a modern prophet should stir people into action, disturb their equanimity into an "insurrection of consciences." Not with pious platitudes, but with

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practical applications - to the race question, perhaps? Should he be scared to speak up, because "somebody may not like it?" Somebody didn't like Our Lord either, nor the apostles, for that matter. It should be obvious that the quality (and the quantity, too) of our lay apostles can greatly boost the effectiveness of the priestly apostolate. They go together, and sometimes they miss the boat together.

Father Louis Twomey, S.J., the author of our article on refugee families, needs no introduction. (He is my boss in the Institute, as you know, and I better think fast to say something nice about him.) He is a regular contributor to THE QUEEN'S WORK, the national magazine of the Sodality, and an inspiring speaker at the Sodality's Summer School of Catholic Action, reaching over 30,000 students every year in cities throughout the U.S. and Canada. Father Twomey's point is well taken: we have an obligation to help refugee families! Just think of the biblical story about "the man who went from Jerusalem to Jericho and fell among bandits." He received "foreign aid" from the Samaritan. And you'll remember, too, that Our Lord invented this example to show a practical application of the most important commandment. It seems, then, that if we love God - IF! - we have no choice but to show practical love for our neighbors in great need, such as the refugees.

Well, friends, that's all for now. The next time we will say a few well chosen words about gasoline taxes, social status and - if your and my search is successful - about the weaknesses of MAN. (Haha!) If that doesn't incite you to send some gift subscriptions... (I hate early suggestions for Christmas gifts, before anyone even thinks of Advent, so I won't say anything about it!)

Keep smiling!

Hubert F. Schiffer, sj.

The Priest's Job In Lay Apostolate

by Rev. Laurence Kelly

Chaplain, Catholic Action Federations, Chicago

Reprinted from WORK (21 W. Superior St., Chicago 10, Ill.) Aug. 1960, p. 7.

The late great Archbishop of Paris, Emmanuel Cardinal Suhard, has written beautifully of the priest's role as prophet in our society. Something of the prophet's restlessness must possess every priest as he preaches God's truth to his people. "The priest," said the Cardinal, "brings to humanity a gift without compare, that of disquietude." In pointing out to souls the terrifying gap between the world as we view it and the world as Christ would have it, "the priest disturbs the calm surface overlying evil and hate; the revolt he preaches is the insurrection of consciences."

Action - Not Pious Sentiments!

The modern prophet strives to stir people to ACTION, to shake them from complacency, to awaken them to their responsibilities as Christians. It is this prophetic role that the chaplain to Catholic Action groups must play. In training lay leaders to take their place as apostles in the temporal order, the priest must first disturb their equanimity. The laity have to be made aware of the creeping paganism all around them, the inroads made by materialism, the over-riding need for redemption of the secular society in which they are immersed.

The transfer from passivity to action, from calm acceptance of the status quo

(Continued on p.8.)



Dish towels are unsanitary, I told her.

A Man's Life ... IN A WOMAN'S WORLD

by EDWARD FISCHER

Reprinted with permission from AVE MARIA (Notre Dame, Ind., \$6.00 a year) Aug. 20, 1960, p. 26 f.

WOMEN write all of the life-in-the-home columns for magazines. They write most of the me-and-my-family type articles, too. They are more adept at this than men are, for they are more alert to the foibles of domestic life. They are especially alert to the foibles of men.

What they say about men tends to be embarrassingly right, for men are not often on the side of the angels. And certainly men are not yet ready for self rule.

I am not complaining about truth;

it is only the imbalance of power that makes the situation an unhappy one. As the *New York Times* said, "Propaganda in itself is not vicious, but a monopoly of it is."

So I decided to lessen the monopoly slightly by finding out whether or not men might have a few pet peeves that women writers have overlooked. Men were hesitant to

Edward Fischer, *AVE MARIA's* screen and television columnist, teaches in the Communication Arts Department at the University of Notre Dame.

talk at first, and it was difficult to tell whether they lacked complaints or whether they feared to speak out. I broke through their hesitancy by telling them about a peeve of my own.

In the Army I learned that dishes should be air-dried. It was unsanitary to slap a soggy dish towel against them. While doing my duty as a citizen soldier I was led to believe that any man with a dish towel in his hands is subversive, should have the buttons cut from his uni-

form and should be drummed out of the corps. For readers with scholarly interests I add here the footnote that in all of military history there is no record of any such offense.

I marched home from the wars feeling that this bit of intelligence alone made four years of military service worthwhile. I bought a wire dish rack and set it on the sink. Mary asked what it was, and I explained that you just set the washed dishes in there and let nature do the rest. She said there will be no air-dried dishes in this house. She pointed to the air-dried silver — it was as dappled as a cow pony. She held aloft an air-dried glass — it was as foggy as a film made in London.

Enlightened self-interest and the hope that springs eternal both nudged me to plead my case. I reached back 100 years and grabbed a doctrine developed by Courbet in France, the doctrine of realism in art. I expressed it in six simple words: *everything that is natural is beautiful*.

But Mary is more on the side of the angels than she is on the side of nature. That is why the unsanitary dish towel is still enthroned in our home.

That anecdote breached the dike and caused men to pour forth their peevish. Most of their disgruntlement gathered like dark clouds around the family car. This is not surprising since the automobile is

the great success symbol of our time.

One pedestrian complained that when he gives his wife the keys to the car the gas indicator points to F. When she returns the keys it points to E. When he whined she said that she thought that F means fair and that E means excellent.

Another husband sighed over the way his wife mistreats a car. She has never learned to back but that does not stop her from trying to park in skimpy places. She scrapes the fenders on his car and on all other cars that get in the way. When she gets near the curbing she slams the sidewalls against it with vehemence. The sides of the tires wear through before the tread grows dim.

Even in families in which the wife does not drive, it is not exactly a case of peace in our time. In such families the husband, if he is not eternally vigilant, becomes a liveried chauffeur without benefit of livery.

One man said that when he deposits his wife in the center of the shopping district, she promises to be back "in just a minute." For a while he took her at her word and double parked, but soon observed that this is one of the worst things you can do for an ulcer. Now he cruises around until he finds a parking space, goes to the store to report his location and returns to

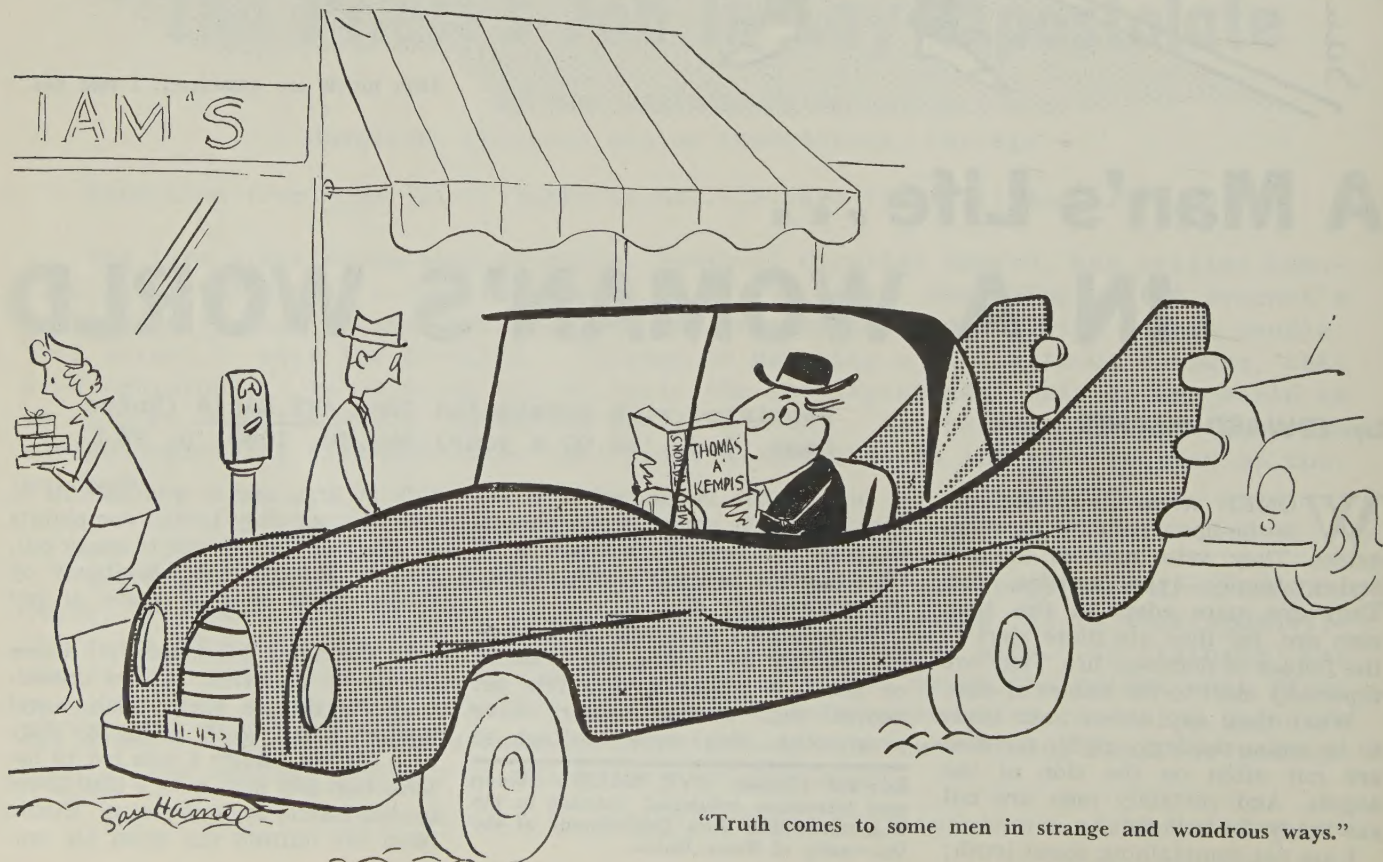
the car to await the passage of time.

He used to sit staring into space, interrupting his staring at intervals to drop more coins into the parking meter. After a long time he began resenting just sitting there playing goatherd to the running years. He felt building up inside himself an explosive force that might well have triggered World War III. He seethed most during the times his wife was having maintenance work done on her hair. It was then he felt all the bitterness in the world gathering on the dashboard in front of him.

Then one day he did something that let light into his dark little world: he put a book of meditations by Thomas à Kempis into the glove compartment. Now he reads from it; and, because his wife is a meandering shopper, he has learned such lessons as, "It is better to feel compunction than to be able to define it." Truth comes to some men in strange and wondrous ways.

The last time I saw him I remarked that he is looking more redeemed than most people. His face reflects a joy that usually illuminates only the faces of saints and minor poets. His wife said she hadn't noticed.

Another man has a waiting problem because his wife is addicted to antiques. He tagged along with her until he learned that if you have seen one antique shop you have seen them all. From then on he, too,



"Truth comes to some men in strange and wondrous ways."

logged many hours sitting in the car drumming his fingers on the steering wheel.

One day while his wife was fingering some old vases, he slipped into a drug store to buy a drawing pad and a box of crayons. This was the best 35 cents he has ever spent. He propped the pad against the steering wheel and made sketches of the neighborhood.

At first he was not artist enough to paint a cherry pie on the side of a bakery truck. But in the course of years he became an accomplished artist. An artist develops only through hours and hours of undisturbed work. His wife takes credit for his progress.

He has never had a one-man show, but he ought to. He ought to have it not for the sake of art but for the sake of the inspiration he gives to those who also serve that only stand and wait.

One poor soul said that it is a lucky man whose wife is addicted to antiques. His is the "Woman of the Future" type. She has dedicated her life to dealing out of housework all of the no-stoop, no-bend, no-stretch. Her vacuum cleaner, refrigerator and dryer are makes that demand the least of the human body. Her car has power steering, power seat adjustment and power window lifts. She brandishes a gunlike gadget that shoots one television program off the screen and shoots another one on.

Her body is not worn except for the tip of her right index finger, callused from pushing buttons. The husband will not mention this in front of her because his body is not worn except for the thumb callus developed from spinning the wheel of a cigarette lighter and from pressing golf tees into the unyielding earth.

When the wife was too poor to own gadgets she was of Gothic structure, that form of architecture stressing the long, lean and airy. The more gadgets she bought the more she turned to Romanesque structure, that form of architecture stressing the rounded arch and the massiveness of the elements.

She wants to return to the Gothic era and she wants gadgets to get her there. She wants her husband to buy her a rowing machine, a bike exerciser and a couch that vibrates here, there and everywhere.

The husband can well afford these things, but he hesitates to buy them. He does not want to admit that life is so out of joint — gadgets to correct the errors caused by gadgets.

The husband wants to lose weight, too, but not for aesthetic reasons.



He wants to lose weight because his wife keeps losing the key. That needs some explaining:

The wife is forever locking herself out of the house. Her husband begs her to hide a key somewhere about the premises — under a flat rock or on top of the rose trellis — anywhere that will be handy when she finds herself sans key. But she is the suspicious type: she fears some sneak thief will sniff it out and let himself in by the front door.

At frequent intervals the husband has to slither through the basement window to open the door from the inside. He finds the window fits him sooner each year. One of these days he will get wedged in it to become a permanent part of the architecture.

This talk of reducing caused one husband to recall a complaint that has to do with food. His wife never asks him to help plan a menu except at the end of a heavy meal when nobody wants to think of food. If he does not respond she complains that he is of no help to her. If he suggests a menu, she says, "Again!" or "Oh, you wouldn't like that," or

"Whenever I fix that you don't eat it."

While gathering these complaints I was often reminded of a sequence that recurs in war films: a soldier takes off across an open field to storm an emplacement but is cut down by gunfire; someone mutters, "Poor devil, he never had a chance." The men who told of their pet peeves had the same look in their eyes as the man who mutters, "Poor devil, he never had a chance." For they realize that this slim collection of peeves is greatly outnumbered and outweighed by the great body of women's writings through the years.

To bolster my slipping ego, I bragged to Mary, "I'll bet these complaints scrape scabs off old wounds. I'll bet they start a train of dark thoughts in men's minds."

She said, "Oh, I don't know. They'll probably have a hard time thinking of complaints. It will make them realize how lucky they are."

There is a woman's point of view for you. It is an attitude of mind that when developed into a series of essays and bound into book form makes for a best seller.

All Nations Are *Obligated* to Aid the Refugee Families of the World

BY LOUIS J. TWOMEY, S.J.

WORLD WAR II officially ended fifteen years ago. But the fabulously complex problems it created did not end. Actually most of these problems, instead of slackening, have increased in intensity in the intervening years.

But of all the grim aftermaths of war none other has caused such human misery as the uprooting of hundreds of thousands of men, women, and children from their homes and homelands.

In the United States very few indeed have ever experienced the poignant sorrow of having to flee from all they have known and loved. Hence, we Americans find it difficult to appreciate in any meaningful way the depths of anguish afflicting the minds, hearts, and bodies of untold numbers of our fellow men who are refugees from the devastation of war or from the inhumanity of tyrants.

Few refugee families have been able to stay together in their exile. Most have become separated—husbands from wives, parents from children—with the withering fear that they probably would never be reunited with their loved ones again.

People generally want to live and die in the country of their birth. Only compelling motives will induce them to leave their native lands. The lure of adventure, the desire for material gain, the hope of cultural advance, missionary zeal, etc., have, it is true, persuaded countless Europeans, for instance, to exchange national allegiances.

But we do not here speak of those who freely chose to live un-

der other flags. Our concern rather is with the endless columns of young and old, rich and poor, strong and weak, who have been forced to tread the road of exile with economic hopelessness or the bayonets of despots at their backs.

A minority of these refugees have succeeded in beginning life anew in far-distant places. But the large majority have yet to be absorbed in main streams of the lands of their exile. The result is that in Western Europe, the Middle East, and the Far East refugee camps are a familiar sight. In these makeshift surroundings, the skilled and the unskilled, the professional and the nonprofessional, the educated and the uneducated, the cultured and the uncultured alike must somehow adapt themselves to the bleak environment of haphazard shelters.

They live on hardly more than a subsistence level in a continuing round of deadening monotony. Their souls are weighed down with the dread uncertainty of their futures and a chilling anxiety about the fate of their relatives and friends.

Until the ravages of war and the vicious cruelty of Communism struck them, they were men and women, boys and girls, very much like ourselves. They were doctors and lawyers, employers and employees, husbands and wives, sons and daughters, college and high-school students, priests and nuns, city folk and farmers—a cross section of any ordered society. They went about their daily routines amid the usual pleasures and pains, joys and sorrows of human existence.



"... with the world-wide collaboration of peoples and States . . ."

But now all this is changed—profoundly changed. They find themselves in utterly unfamiliar surroundings. With extreme difficulty, if at all, they adjust themselves to the baffling demands of their new world. Often they are looked upon as intruders and foreigners. Because they don't conform to the image of what has been accepted as a typical American, or Englishman, or Frenchman, they are held in suspicion. Frequently they are regarded as undesirable aliens, as threats to the political, economic, and cultural standards of the national communities into which circumstances entirely beyond their control have thrust them. And thus to their already overwhelming burden is added the sickening awareness of being unwanted and unwanted.

Yes, they are strange people

with strange ways in strange lands. And yet they are members of the great human family. They, like us, share the same basic elements of human equality. They, like us, are created images of God. They, like us, have a common origin—from God; a common purpose—for God; a common destiny—back to God. They, like us, are endowed by God with “certain inalienable rights”—rights which are beyond the reach and tampering of men and governments; rights, in virtue of which they, like us, can claim, yes even demand, all the material and spiritual goods necessary to live as beings of supreme value.

True, they are among the less fortunate of our fellow men. It may even be true that they are the least of Christ's brethren.

In reaction to their tragic plight, we can say—as too many do say—that we are not responsible for the conditions which drove them into exile, and accordingly, have no obligation to offer them assistance.

Maybe in strict justice, we can thus acquit ourselves. This is to say that these millions of enforced wayfarers may not be able to establish a binding claim that we, individually or collectively, owe them that portion of our own material and spiritual resources which is necessary to insure for them at least the minimum requirements for decent human living.

Personally, we believe that a valid case can be made to support the proposition that we are bound in strict justice to contribute such aid. But unless we recognize some sort of serious obligation, we will make no effort to search for the

means to fulfill it.

Since the refugee problem is international in scope, it obviously cannot be solved by individual persons or individual nations acting separately. Some form of international organization is a necessity if the problem is to be attacked realistically. It was evidently in this perspective that Pius XII spoke to the Catholic International Congresses for Social Study, Rome, June 3, 1950:

“The time has come to face squarely, in its full dimensions, the duty of providing for countless families, in their natural, moral, juridical, and economic unity, a just living-space which meets, however modestly, but at the very least in sufficient measure, the demands of human dignity.

“*Away with the selfish preoccupation of nationality and class* which may in the least degree hinder an undertaking loyally embraced and vigorously carried out by the *joint action of all the forces* actually at work or available over the *whole face of the earth*: an undertaking launched with the aid of every initiative and effort of private individuals and specialized groups, and *with the world-wide collaboration of peoples and States*, each contributing its respective share of wealth in raw materials, in capital, in man power. All the participants in this *common project* should appreciate, finally, the assistance offered to it by the Church” (*The Catholic Mind*, August, 1950, pp. 507-508 — underscoring added).

It would appear that the Pope rests his plea for “the world-wide

collaboration of peoples and States” on an obligation in justice which is supported by the traditional Christian teaching that the right of private property does not nullify the God-ordained purpose of the earth's material goods—that is, to satisfy the needs of all men. In other words, privately owned economic resources may not be so used as to exclude the possibility of diverting them, when the necessity arises, to serve the needs of the world-wide community.

But even if justice imposed no obligations in this matter, charity clearly does. And the obligations of charity bind as seriously as those of justice.

Every man of whatever race, nationality, and color possesses with every other man a common origin, a common purpose, a common destiny, and above all, a common Father. This multiple common bond is the foundation of the only brotherhood of men that makes any sense.

All men are brothers by nature. And by the Incarnation of the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, they have been raised to an incomparably higher level.

Only within the context of man's natural and supernatural closeness with his fellow man can the second of the two great commandments be rightly understood. “Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.”

To love our neighbor in the Gospel sense means that we wish, and as far as in us lies, strive to help him secure all the material and spiritual means necessary for him to live in the fullness of his creation in God's image and of his redemption in Christ's blood.

In facing up to these obligations toward our fellow men in the hapless and nondescript army of refugees, we must recognize that charity is universal. It transcends national frontiers; it understands no color or racial lines. It extends to all men of all nations and on all levels.

Only in the light of this attitude can we see the true meaning of Pius XII's directive that we do “away with the selfish preoccupation of nationality and class.” Only thus can we be persuaded to contribute our full measure towards binding the open wounds and soothing the aching heart of Christ as we discover Him in each of the castaways among the earth's most pitiful grouping of our least brethren.

P R E J U D I C E

“Prejudgments become prejudices only if they are not reversible when exposed to new knowledge. A prejudice, unlike a simple misconception, is actively resistant to all evidence that would unseat it. We tend to grow emotional when a prejudice is threatened with contradiction. Thus the difference between ordinary prejudgments and prejudice is that one can discuss and rectify a prejudgment without emotional resistance.”

Gordon W. Allport,
THE NATURE OF PREJUDICE

into zealous action for the cause of Christ, is not made easily nor painlessly; the member of the Christian Family Movement and of the Young Christian Workers has to be shaken loose from a mentality that often does not distinguish him from his pagan neighbor. This is a basic and ever recurring task of the chaplain. As long as couples come into CFM and grapple with the personal challenges presented by its introductory manual, the 'Yellow Book,' the priest must be "disturbing the peace."

Inspiration and Guidance

However, he must be more. CFM is rapidly attaining maturity. New groups are still springing up all around the country and will continue to, we trust, but there are increasing numbers of couples who have been in the movement for some years now. These are people who are keenly aware of the chasm between the ideal and the real; they have captured the spirit of Christ in the Scriptures and Liturgy; they have made an irrevocable commitment to the lay apostolate; and they are looking more and more to their chaplains for inspiration and guidance.

To them the priest must be a real spiritual father. He must encourage them to go forward, point out possibilities for apostolic action, help them see their particular contribution to the life of the Church, and support them in time of disappointment. It is significant that Father Dennis Geaney's new manual, "CFM and the Priest," devotes most of its space to spiritual direction and guidance of couples. The practical questions are answered, to be sure - how to prepare a leader couple, what part the priest plays at a meeting, how to fit CFM into a busy parish schedule - but these are secondary. The book's great value lies in its delineation of the priest's role as teacher and prophet. ("CFM and the Priest" is available at \$1.00 a copy from the Christian Family Movement, 100 West Monroe St., Chicago 3, Ill.)

Whether he starts a group on his own initiative, or is asked to begin by some of his parishioners, or whether a group is "thrust upon him" as he moves to a new assignment, the priest in specialized Catholic Action faces a real problem: How does one justify such a large commitment of his time and energy with a relatively small number of parishioners? Father Geaney's position is that training lay apostles is a vital part of the priestly ministry: it is a most valid participation in the priesthood of Christ who spent so much of His time with the Twelve; it will be well worth the priest's time and energy if he can help his people see and assume the layman's role in the temporal order.

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SOCIAL ACTION DIGEST (published monthly by the Institute of Social Order, Loyola University) is dedicated to the promotion of the private enterprise system, of co-operation and fair dealing between management and labor, of inter-racial justice and harmony, and, in general, of the Christian reconstruction of our modern socio-economic life. Every issue offers several thought-provoking excerpts of outstanding books, articles and speeches.

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